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The commencement of the races to-day gives a very agreeable promise of the general character of the meeting. The events are interesting both in the diversity of interest as far as the numerous competitors are concerned and the many representatives of "rapid transit" entered. Over two hundred horses are now stabled at Jerome Park, and many Southern and Western stables, which have never before been represented, will be entered on this occasion. The American Jockey Club expect that this meeting will be the most brilliant and most interesting in their annals. When respectability and liberality combine in the sports of the turf to attract the public there can be only one result, success.

To-day a representative riflemen, to whose keeping the honor of America in the coming contest for the prize of skill has been intrusted, embark for Ireland. They are tried and trusty men, on whose achievements the nation they represent may count securely. It is not in the power of man to assure victory, but whoever knows the men who sail on board the good ship Chester for the Irish land know that by no fault of theirs will the issue be imperilled. Not a man in the team but can show a brilliant record of marksmanship and honors won in contests with the best marksmen of this Continent and Europe. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that they leave their native shores with the confidence of men who go to reap laurels and are attended by the proud and confident anticipations of their friends that victory will rest upon their standard in the coming contest. So evenly matched are the contestants that the battle will be close and keen. Victory must be the reward of the very highest skill. The slightest blunder is almost certain to bring defeat to the party making it. We have not data sufficiently exact in reference to the composition of the Irish team to enable us to judge with any degree of certainty what may be the result of the new trial of skill between Ireland and America. The scores made by the competitors for places on the Irish team prove, however, conclusively that there will be no want of dangerous opponents. Some of the Irish scores recorded equal the phenomenal achievement of Major Fulton in the international match, and a long string of competitors have made scores throwing such brilliant shots as Messrs. Miller and Johnson so far behind that there is a prospect that these gentlemen may not find a place on the new team. In view of the strong reserve the Irish have developed it is well nigh certain that the Americans will elect to shoot with six men, as did the Irish under similar circumstances last year. It must be the policy of the Americans to depend on the extraordinary skill of Colonel Bodine and Major Fulton to insure victory. Probably no two of the Irish riflemen equal in the brilliancy of their shooting the two foremost American marksmen; but, *en revanche*, there is a greater uniformity of skill among the dozen or so of marksmen from whom the selection of their team must be made. The average scores of the first eight men among the Irish competitors seem to be somewhat higher than our American records. The difference certainly is very slight and may be satisfactorily accounted for by the fact that owing to the desultory way in which the Irish practice is carried on we cannot compare the scores made by all the competitors on any one day with the scores made by the American team on any of their practice days at Creedmoor. In the case of the Irish riflemen we are therefore obliged to credit each man with the highest score made to him in order to obtain some idea of the possible result of the contest. By this system the Irish riflemen are made to appear at their best and perhaps more formidable than they will prove themselves, because it is well known that in no matches do the individuals composing the team do their very best work. Some men run ahead with a remarkably brilliant score, as happened to Major Fulton in the international contest last year, while others will unaccountably and suddenly drop far below their usual average. Target shooting depends so much on the perfectly healthy condition of the human frame that the slightest indisposition affects injuriously the rifleman's aim.

The Americans have a decided advantage in the age of the men who compose their team. With a single exception they have passed that period of life when the excitement of a contest would be likely to render them unsteady or unreliable, as happens frequently to younger men. Their chances of success may therefore be looked upon as very good, and the Irish riflemen will find in them worthy opponents. After all, what is most important for America is that, whether we win or lose in the coming contest, we must show that our claim to a front place among the riflemen of the world is based on solid grounds. And this, we feel assured, the men who go forth to-day as representative American riflemen will achieve. We can therefore sincerely wish them *bon voyage*. Should they return victorious they will meet with such reception as a Roman conqueror might envy; but should Fortune, in her blind decree, condemn them to defeat—as they lose no honor in the contest—America will still have a warm welcome for the men who strove for victory though they failed to achieve it. There remains but to wish the gentlemen of the team on behalf of the American nation a pleasant voyage and a safe and speedy return to their native land.

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**A MAINE CENTENNIAL.**—Our correspondent at Machias, Me., gives an attractive narrative of the event upon which the people of that part of the world intend to hang a centennial celebration of their own in a few days. Our glorious naval combats of the second war with England have so nearly overshadowed all other naval events in our history that the only sea battle of the Revolution commonly remembered by the people is Paul Jones' desperate combat in the *Bon Homme Richard*. In the blaze of such names as the Constitution, the United States, the Essex, the Hornet, the names of the lighter craft that constituted our infant navy are lost to the nation at large. But the neighborhoods which supplied the resolute spirits that manned the cutters and sloops and schooners, upon whose our daring fishermen first faced the naval power of the mother country, cherish the traditions of local glory and are prepared to do honor to the whole series of events, none of which can be considered insignificant in view of the great result, and in this spirit Maine will honor the capture of the *Margareta* and Rhode Island the capture of the *Gaspés*.

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**THE QUESTION OF THE DAY.**—Why these long continued and oppressive hard times? This is the question which everybody is asking, and we hope the great American statesman will not regard it as a conundrum and give it up, but set themselves to work to answer it. An anxious public waits, like the missing gentleman in our Personal columns, to hear of something to its advantage.

Our amiable friend, the chief of the Finance Department, evidently belongs to that class of modest men who "do good by stealth and blush to find it fame." He has been pleased to make such a secret of the urbanity of his manners that we must do him the justice to bring it to the public knowledge, although we are sure that he shall make him blush like a red rose when its reluctant beauty is unfolded to the summer sun. It is too late for the full blown rose to go back and hide its loveliness in the concealing bud when once the June sun has expanded it to admiring eyes. We are sorry to offend Mr. Green's modesty and sully his manly face with ingenuous blushes, but we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of recording the fact that he can receive a compliment with as much grace and return it with as pleasant a courtesy as if the arts of pleasing had always been his study. To prove that we are not indulging in a rhapsody or inventing compliments to soothe the vanity of a gentleman who has so long astonished the public by his manners, we refer our readers to the epistolary billing and cooing between the Comptroller and Mr. Southerland, printed in another column. Mr. Southerland, who is an officer of the School Teachers' Association, is prompted by his grateful sense of Mr. Green's kindness "in the matter of payment of salaries" to write him a letter of grateful encomium, which affords the modest Mr. Green an opportunity to reply with a long encomium on his own virtues. This charming exchange of honeyed commendations is now given to the press, perhaps by some subordinate of the Comptroller, who is unwilling to let these flowers of courtesy "blush unseen and waste their sweetness on the desert air." The publication of these letters may have been so long withheld because subordinates were not quick to take the hint that it would be a grateful service to steal a copy and send it to the newspapers.

That the courteous Comptroller has "done good by stealth" might be safely affirmed on the knowledge of his character. But we have strong confirmatory proof, as will be seen in the report of an interview yesterday with Mr. Southerland, who wrote the letter praising Green, to which the Comptroller replied at great length, praising himself. It appears that a factotum and underling of Green—Clark by name—whom he keeps in pay to manufacture public opinion by stealth and make it fame in the newspapers, called on Mr. Southerland and urged him to write such a letter. It appears that the President of the School Teachers' Association merely acted the part of an amanuensis to Green's factotum, so that the complimentary letter to which the Comptroller so politely replies was a letter in his own praise, gotten up by himself. He induced Mr. Southerland to write his eulogy, and the praise being pitched in too low a key Mr. Green takes occasion to make a reply, wherein full justice is done to his own great merits, which no pen but his was likely to set forth. The literary public was amused some years ago when Walt Whitman began his "Leaves of Grass" by the frank declaration, "I celebrate myself." This was so refreshingly cool and frank that the public relished it; but our ingenuous Comptroller is more artful and refined. He, indeed, celebrates himself; but "for ways that are dark and tricks that are vain" the heathen Chinese was not more "peculiar." The surprise at Mr. Green's publicly treating anybody with courtesy is mitigated by finding that he is virtually replying to his own letter; that having inspired by underhand means an epistle of praise to himself, he echoes and exaggerates the praise in a reply. Readers of the interview with Mr. Southerland will see how this thing stands and be able to appreciate the arts by which Mr. Green angles for indorsements which never come to him self-proffered.

He pretends that he does not read the *HERALD*, and that he attaches no importance to anything it says about him, and yet he sent one of his tools to Mr. Southerland, asking him to make a reply to a paragraph in the *HERALD*, which he had not seen. How serenely unconcerned the Comptroller must be at the *HERALD*'s comments! He does not even read them; he would care nothing about them if he did read them, and yet he intrigued in a way that will make him blush like a coral, now that it is exposed, to get a paragraph in the *HERALD* contradicted. It would seem that Mr. Southerland is a religious man; at any rate he says he does not read the Sunday newspapers, and as the paragraph to which his letter relates appeared in the *HERALD* of Sunday, May 16, it is obvious that the idea of writing a letter about it was put into his head by somebody else. And he tells who it was that asked for it—a man who is a notorious paid sycophant of the Comptroller, and has been employed by him before in similar tricks to practise upon the public. How very indifferent Mr. Green must be to what the *HERALD* says of him when he resorts to arts whose exposure will cover him with blushes to parry the effect of its criticism. What a model of courtesy this churlish man is when he dictates letters of compliment to himself and replies to them with his own pen! So true is it in his case that courtesy, like charity, "begins at home," and bids fair to stay there.

**THE HARLEM FLATS.**—General Smith created a sensation in the Board of Police Commissioners yesterday by his arraignment of the Street Cleaning Bureau for its action in regard to the filling of the Harlem flats. It even appears from the Commissioner's statement that at least one of the police surgeons who signed the remarkable report made public some days ago has declared that his signature was obtained to the document by the peculiar coercion which the heads of departments sometimes use in dealing with their subordinates—the fear of decapitation. Dr. Fetter, the surgeon referred to by General Smith, is to be examined before the Board to-day, and we may hope that before the new Commissioner is done with the matter the action of Matsell and Diabecker will be so fully exposed as to make their retirement a necessity.

**THE EXPLOITS OF CAPTAIN NIXON** upon the seas and in the ports of the Antilles, if not so daring as those of the old buccaners of the Caribbean Sea, are quite as interesting, and the story which we print to-day reads like a page from one of Michael Scott's novels.

ders from Mississippi. He gives a melancholy account of the politicians of the State, both democratic and republican. It is not pleasant to read that in Mississippi the democratic leaders are still talking about the "nigger," and about his natural capacity or incapacity for citizenship. That question has been decided. The colored man is a citizen; he is entitled to all the rights and privileges of a citizen; and the fact that he is ignorant and easily led, makes it only the more foolish in democratic politicians to drive him away to the republican side by silly talk about his natural fitness. The truth which Mississippi democrats do not seem to remember is that the negro is a man; he has got to be accepted as a part of the body politic. He is so accepted, Mr. Nordhoff has told us, in Louisiana and Arkansas, and it is rank folly in any one to think of or treat him in any other way in other States. If he is ignorant, educate him; if he is pliable, conciliate him; if he is fearful, reassure him by kindness and justice. That is the way to deal with the colored voter.

Mr. Seward said, during the canvass of 1860, that no one would ever be President of the United States who spelled negro with two g's. It is probably true that no party will get the colored vote in the Southern States, which makes a similar blunder in spelling. We advise these Mississippi democrats to get up a spelling match at Vicksburg, and to turn out of their party every man who is found to spell negro with two g's. Ignorance of that kind has been very fatal to the democratic party in other days, and as we are to have a general election next year it would be well for its members everywhere to examine their leaders in the spelling of certain words on which they have often blundered.

To be serious, the democratic leaders of Mississippi ought to understand that violence, or threats of violence, bitterness and cursing the negro will not help them. A federal democratic administration would not dare to support them in any wrong toward any man, white or black, arising out of politics. To stir up political hatred is in them the height of folly. The Northern people are watching with jealous eyes the conduct of the South. The North does not mean to deal unjustly with the Southern States; it does not wish to oppress the Southern whites; it responded, very readily, in the elections of last fall and this spring to the story of republican misrule in the Southern States. Honest republican leaders defeated in Congress this spring the Force bill and the President's Arkansas policy; and did so because they honestly desire harmony and good government in the Southern States. But the people of the North are inclined to be very impatient of democratic folly in the South, particularly when it takes the shape of intolerance of opinion, of denunciation and threats of violence. It is the duty of the good and honest democrats of Mississippi—who, our correspondent says, form the majority of the party—to take the control of their party into their own hands; and they must not merely control, they must sternly reprove and openly and vigorously punish every such base and ridiculous threat as that made in a democratic organ against the Postmaster of Vicksburg. The democratic party cannot afford to countenance such threats. If it wants to regain the confidence of the country its members in the South must promptly and in undeniable terms condemn such folly. If the Mississippi democrats are sensible people they will reject and turn out the fire-eating leaders and editors who have not yet learned common sense, and form a coalition this fall with the honest republicans, inviting them to act with them and to share with them in an effort to relieve the State of misgovernment. Such a coalition of the good men of both parties would show that the democrats of Mississippi are capable of sound and judicious political action, and it would entitle them to the confidence and respect of Northern men of both parties, which they never can get while they suffer, unreprieved, such language and such conduct as disgrace their party, it seems, not only in Vicksburg but elsewhere in Mississippi.

### PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE.

Oh, for the Washington hotels! Even the Indians couldn't stand them.

Rev. Dr. W. H. Furness, of Philadelphia, is residing at the Hotel Brunswick.

Mr. Gauscha A. Grow, of Pennsylvania, is registered at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

Congressman Thomas C. Platt, of Owego, N. Y., is staying at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

State Senator Henry C. Connelly, of Kingston, has arrived at the Metropolitan Hotel.

Inspector General D. B. Speck, United States Army, is quartered at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

Judge Robert H. Brown, of Atlanta, Ga., is among the late arrivals at the Sturtevant House.

General George J. Magee, of Schuylcr county, New York, is sojourning at the Metropolitan Hotel.

Mr. Fulton Paul, United States Consul at Trinidad de Cuba, arrived in this city yesterday and is at the Westminster Hotel.

In Europe it is anticipated that this will be a great year for winged game. The dry weather has given the birds a good start.

Professor T. J. Backus, Vassar College, was today elected Superintendent of the Tennessee Normal School, just established.

Mr. William Ashcroft, the comedian, and Miss Kitty Brooks leave for Europe to-day by the steamship. They have had a race in England from which it seems a fair inference that the English horses are improved in bottom by an infusion of Arab blood.

Mr. James Hamilton, the artist, is stopping at the Hoffman House, and will soon leave for the Pacific coast, with the purpose of making a tour of the world.

Secretary Bristow and family left Louisville yesterday for Washington. The reception given by Captain Z. M. Shirley to the Secretary was a brilliant one, and was attended by nearly every prominent citizen of Louisville.

The last issue of the German official history of the war may correct the habit that is becoming common of regarding the battle at Sedan as a mere massacre of the French. It reports the German loss in that fight at 499 officers and 8,560 men.

Mr. C. P. Leslie, a member of the South Carolina Legislature, is at Barnum's Hotel. Mr. Leslie is the person who was reported in Wednesday's despatches as having left South Carolina because of legal complications arising out of his career while Land Commissioner under Governor Scott's administration.

The Postmaster General, accompanied by his private Secretary, G. A. Guthrie, and Chief Special Agent Woodward, will start next Tuesday or Wednesday for a tour of observation to the offices at St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Indianapolis and other places in the West and Southwest.